



AIDS groups' execs arrested in D.C.

The heads of major AIDS service organizations blast the lack of governmental response on World AIDS Day

By John Zeh

WASHINGTON, D.C. — Angry executives of health service organizations blocked traffic in front of the White House on World AIDS Day, December 1, to demonstrate that the AIDS crisis requires government "resources, not rhetoric" in the decade ahead. Over 200 serious yet cheerful supporters lined Pennsylvania Avenue at noon to scrutinize how D.C. police handled the arrests of 78 protesters, some of whom have AIDS or are HIV-positive. (HIV is a virus thought by many to be a cause of AIDS).

"We're here to be arrested in absolute

President George Bush was away at a shipboard summit with Soviet leaders, prompting Urvashi Vaid, head of the National Gay and Lesbian Task Force (NGLTF) to say, "It's his fault—a, he's away at Malta."

Vaid moderated a pre-arrest rally in Lafayette Park where leaders of AIDS service organizations analyzed the epidemic's impact on people of color and documented the depth of dissatisfaction with federal and state failure to adequately address the AIDS challenge.

The San Francisco AIDS Foundation (SFAF) and other community-based organizations that "provide backbone and leadership" in AIDS services are "reeling under the impact of growing case loads," said Pat Christen, SFAF's new director. "We need help. We need action. Words are no longer enough from the President. My city is reeling under the impact of this epidemic. Without assistance, the so-called San Francisco model [of community-based services] will be in a shambles within two months."

In the last three years, SFAF's client population had increased 400 percent and hotline calls have more than doubled, she said. "Our budget has had to grow from \$1 million to \$6 million with absolutely no increase, no additional assistance, from government agencies. We cannot expect the private sector to carry the load that should justifiably be carried by our whole nation."

"The government's response to this massive health care crisis has been riddled with neglect" since day one, charged Reggie Williams, of Black and White Men Together's Task Force on AIDS Prevention and Education in San Francisco. "Government officials from the highest level to the lowest have abandoned thousands of people to die, and even more to languish in illness and despair, tantalized by news reports of early medical interventions they'll never be able to afford."

A huge "AIDS Report Card" held up by D.C. AIDS Action Council head Jean McGuire awarded Bush an "F" in four categories: national AIDS strategy, funding, prevention, and access to treatment and care. It gave the president an "incomplete" for anti-discrimination protection because of his failure to push for passage of the Americans With Disabilities Act in the U.S. House of Representatives.

"Blacks, Latinos, Asians, and Native Americans diagnosed with AIDS are approaching 50 percent of all reported cases," said Gil Gerald, of the Minority AIDS Project in Los Angeles. "Mr. President, members of (Congress), stop turning a blind eye toward health care needs of poor women by allocating resources in a manner that stops pitting communities and health concerns against one another."

"If you are wealthy, you can be treated and forgiven for your health condition in a private clinic," he said. "If you are poor,

Continued on page 7

DRAWING THE LINE



No referendum for Mass. gay rights law

The attorney general rejects their petition, but opponents can file an appeal

By Laura Briggs

BOSTON — The day is ours.

As *GCN* goes to press, the Attorney General has just announced that he has rejected the right-wing attempt to overturn the new lesbian and gay civil rights law (Chapter 516) by placing a referendum question on the 1990 ballot. While opponents of the law still have the option of filing an appeal and obtaining petitions from the state, Attorney General James Shannon rejected the referendum petition Dec. 7 because an amendment to the law exempts religious institutions.

"I'm elated and exhausted," Arline Isaacson, co-chair of the Massachusetts Gay and Lesbian Political Caucus told *GCN*. "It's good to win."

After reviewing the petition for its constitutionality, Shannon threw it out on the grounds that it violated Article 48 of the State Constitution, which says that matters relating to religion are excluded as subjects for the referendum petition process.

In his decision, Shannon wrote "the excluded matters provision has consistently been read to mean that if any portion of a law relates to a matter excluded from the referendum process, the law in its entirety may not be the subject of a referendum petition."

"I'm very pleased," said Kevin Cathcart, executive director of the Boston-based Gay and Lesbian Advocates and Defenders (GLAD). "We filed a brief on the religion issue, and I'm very pleased that he rejected it on those grounds," he told *GCN*. "Shannon interpreted the law, I think correctly, to say that this matter should not go on the ballot. The other side wanted to put an unconstitutional question on the ballot."

Six other organizations joined GLAD in filing briefs with the Attorney General's Office that argued that since the gay rights law related to religion, it should be excluded from the ballot. They were: the Greater

Boston Gay and Lesbian Political Alliance, Lawrence Tribe, a Harvard law professor and constitutional law expert, the Unitarian Universalist Association, the Mass. Teachers Association, the Gay and Lesbian Bar Association, and the Women's Bar Association.

"The irony of all this is that the amendment that is causing their petition not to be certified was filed by opponents of the bill, it was an amendment we lobbied against," said Isaacson.

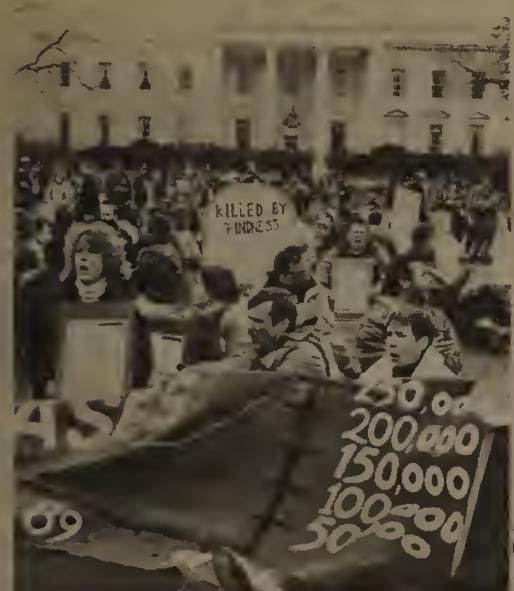
Boston *Herald* columnist and homophobe Don Feder tried to put pressure on the Attorney General's office to rule in favor of the petition by writing that the religious objection is "absurd on its face" and trashing Shannon in his column. Feder also called the law "officially condoning what most consider perversion, attacking traditional morality under the guise of combatting prejudice."

However, Isaacson told *GCN* that "This is a very solid legal victory. Shannon would not have ruled this way if he didn't believe he could win in court."

"I am very heartened by the decision," said David Candeias of the Coalition for Lesbian and Gay Civil Rights. "It would be very good to be channelling all the energy that would be going into a repeal effort into other important issues, like domestic partnership, abortion, and the repeal of sodomy laws," he told *GCN*.

If opponents of the gay rights law file an appeal, they will be able to get blank petitions from the state, which will contain a summary of the referendum. Isaacson said that she will continue to negotiate about how that summary will read because "what goes onto that petition will determine whether or not people decide to sign it. The homophobes want the wording to be as confusing as possible; we want it to be worded

Continued on page 7



Protesters block traffic in front of the White House on World AIDS Day, Dec. 1

frustration and despair over the government's lack of response to this epidemic," said Paul Boneberg, who leads Mobilization Against AIDS in San Francisco.

The direct action protest was organized by a coalition of about 50 AIDS advocacy, activist, and service groups in response to the World Health Organization's call for observance of the second international World AIDS Day.

"Day by day for two-and-a-half years, I've seen resources diminishing, disappearing," said Tony Allen, of Earthtide Inc., a clinic in Baltimore that serves communities of color. "We're begging, damn near down on our knees, and not getting one red cent," he told the crowd observing the arrests. Those who were arrested each paid a \$50 fine and forfeited trial.

Elizabeth Kaeton of Baltimore's Chase-Breton Clinic echoed Allen's complaint, blasting the city officials for failing to pay costs of rising client demand. "We're seeing 15 to 20 newly diagnosed HIV-positive people a week (without) any money from the city," she said.

"We have rich resources, but we aren't able to tap into them, to get them to mobilize. We need money to help organize [what] we already have," she said. "We need leadership mobilization, we need it now, and we need it from the top."

NEWSNOTES

Quote of the week

"Two guys, one cart, fresh pasta...figure it out."

— Designing Women's Suzanne Sugarbaker explains to her co-worker, Mary Jo Shively, why the two gentlemen up the aisle may not fit the scenario described in the "How to Meet Men at the Grocery Store" chapter of Power Dating.

Straight challenge to foster care law

LACONIA, N.H. — A straight couple recently filed suit here challenging New Hampshire's foster care policy which explicitly prohibits gay men and lesbians from becoming foster care parents. The state's foster care policy is similar to the one in Massachusetts in effectively banning gay foster parents. Although Massachusetts does not specifically say that gay people cannot become foster parents, the state's policy puts lesbians, gay men, and other unmarried people last on the list for foster care placement.

Carol Stuart and Rev. Richard Stuart, who have been foster parents before, refused to answer a question on the form to renew their foster care license about whether or not they were gay, according to the *Boston Globe*. They argued that the question was an invasion of their privacy and filed suit in Superior Court with the assistance of the American Civil Liberties Union of New Hampshire.

The suit does not question the discriminatory policy itself, but rather challenges the process by which it was developed by the Division of Children and Youth Services. Nevertheless, if the court agrees with the Stuarts, the policy could be overturned or, at the very least, the court could require a hearing on the policy before it is reinstated.

□ Laura Briggs

Men of color discuss AIDS info

BOSTON — All men of color are invited to the second Men of Color AIDS Information Group here December 14. The event is being sponsored by the Multicultural AIDS Coalition (MAC), a professional non-profit organization of and for communities of color.

MAC is made up of leading educators, health care providers, and human service professionals from the African-American, Latino, Haitian and other communities. MAC's mandate is to encourage state-wide networking, collaboration and advocacy on issues of HIV infection and AIDS on behalf of all people of color by providing direct education as well as assistance in the development of leadership program models.

MAC has been actively involved in a number of projects since its inception in June 1989. The coalition has developed a number of public service announcements targeted specifically to communities of color, co-sponsored 14 Summer Youth Initiative Programs, including the Rap Attack

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December 25 closed

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Kennedys present money to Fenway

BOSTON — Fenway Community Health Center (FCHC) executive director Dale Orlando (center) is flanked by U.S. Rep. Joseph Kennedy (D-Boston) and U.S. Senator Edward Kennedy (D-Mass.) at the Dec. 6 announcement of three federal AIDS grants that will help support FCHC's health services for people with AIDS and HIV infection.

The grants include:

- \$105,000 supplemental grant to continue the Metropolitan Area HIV Services Project, which includes several other area service organizations: Dimock Community Health Center, Boston City Hospital, Visiting Nurse Association of Boston and the AIDS Action Committee. The project's aims are to provide direct care to people with HIV, to educate community-based providers about HIV-related care, and to develop resources like housing, mental health and home care for people with HIV infection and AIDS.
- \$425,000 per year for the Drug Abuse and Health Care Services Project, which will provide primary medical care at substance abuse treatment programs targeted to people with HIV or at high risk for contracting HIV. FCHC will administer this project, which will also involve Dimock Community Health Center, Martha Eliot Health Center, and Cambridge City Hospital.
- \$302,000 from the Health Resources and Services Administration has been granted to FCHC for construction of its planned outpatient facility, which will provide services to people with HIV infection and AIDS.

Edward Kennedy, who is credited with helping to secure federal funding announced at the event, said of the projects, "As AIDS changes from a fatal disease to a chronic condition, such programs become essential."

Joseph Kennedy was lauded by FCHC for his efforts to help the agency obtain the special construction project grant.

□ Laura Briggs

ACT UP demands testing policy from AIDS service group

The AIDS Action Committee responds by pointing to issues about access and resources

By Laura Briggs

BOSTON — A handful of ACT UP members leafleted and picketed the AIDS Action Committee office Dec. 1, World AIDS Awareness Day, calling for an immediate policy statement advocating that all people at high risk for AIDS seek testing for HIV antibody status. But the AIDS Action Committee (AAC) who, along with the Massachusetts Department of Public Health, will be releasing a policy statement similar to what ACT UP demands in January, charged the AIDS activist group with being too simplistic and ignoring the real differences in how HIV testing affects different com-

munities.

"We demand that the AAC tell people at high risk to be tested so that they don't find out that they have AIDS from their first bout of pneumocystis," ACT UP member Ed Boyce told *GCN*. "It's more traumatic to find out when you are sick and weakened" that you have AIDS than to find out by monitoring your HIV status, he said.

"I have known for three years that I was HIV positive, and have been monitoring my T-cells. When I found out that my T-cells were low, I got on AZT," said Dan Pitcher of ACT UP's AAC Demonstration Working Group. "Since the announcement that AZT is available to people who are asymptomatic, and the availability of aerosolized pentamidine for pneumocystis pneumonia, it has become the standard of care to encourage people to seek out HIV testing."

T-cell monitoring is a way of examining the immune system; a low T-cell count raises the risk for an opportunistic infection. Earlier this year, clinical trials demonstrated that the anti-viral drug AZT (zidovudine) was effective in slowing the progress of AIDS in some people who have not become sick, though there is much controversy surrounding this highly toxic drug. Aerosolized pentamidine (AP) has been shown to be effective in both treating and preventing pneumocystis pneumonia, the number one killer of people with AIDS.

ACT UP members met with AAC on two occasions, once at a public forum in September (see *GCN*, Oct. 8) and again on Nov. 17. They came away dissatisfied. "There was a lot of appeasing language, but nothing concrete. They were basically saying 'We're in the process,'" said Boyce.

"There is a policy that the AAC's board is

Continued on page 7

O'Leary resigns top post at troubled NGRA

The long-time politico's departure sets the scene for major changes at the financially successful but conflict-ridden public interest law firm

By Jennie McKnight

SAN FRANCISCO — Jean O'Leary, ace fundraiser and long-time lesbian politico, resigned as executive director of the National Gay Rights Advocates (NGRA) Dec. 4 amid a storm of controversy that has been steadily growing for several weeks. Leonard Graff, the current legal director at NGRA, has been named to replace O'Leary on an interim basis as the 11-year-old public interest law firm faces the challenges of rebuilding its credibility and hiring a legal staff wiped out by resignations and firings.

In her letter of resignation, O'Leary said she thought "NGRA would be dealt a mortal blow" if the publicity surrounding the controversy — which she called "personal attacks" and a "feeding frenzy in the press" — continued. At the Dec. 4 press conference held in San Francisco announcing the departure, NGRA Board Chair Richard White said the organization's board accepted O'Leary's resignation "with reluctance."

O'Leary's resignation is the latest in a string of staff changes that have involved the majority of the staff in both the San Francisco and Los Angeles branches of the organization. In the last several months, at least eight staff members have quit or have been asked to resign. As the internal controversy brewing at NGRA became more public, several ex-staff members told the press that O'Leary was the central figure involved in the problems at NGRA, and that her departure was necessary if the organization was to continue.

NGRA's internal struggles gained national attention in November, when the board of directors asked the two staff attorneys, Cynthia Goldstein and Ben Schatz, to resign. (See *GCN*, Nov. 26, 1989.) Since Graff had tendered his resignation in September, to be effective in December, the departures of the two staff attorneys seriously damaged the public's perception of NGRA's ability to carry out its legal work. Cooperating attorneys who worked with NGRA on a pro bono basis were quoted in local papers saying they would no longer work with the group, and the heads of several lesbian and gay national and legal groups sent a letter to White condemning the ouster of Schatz and Goldstein.

While the purging of the legal staff galvanized the anger of many both within and outside of NGRA, criticisms of the organization, and O'Leary, have gone much deeper. As more and more of the group's dirty laundry has been aired, public scrutiny has focused on a variety of issues, including NGRA's organizational priorities, its emphasis on and ethical standards for fundraising, and its bookkeeping methods, as well as O'Leary's management style and personal conduct.

At least part of the picture that has emerged is one of a non-profit organization that has experienced a huge amount of growth under O'Leary's fundraising wizardry. While no one has questioned O'Leary's ability to raise money, conflicts have arisen regarding the organizational resources devoted to development and the percentage of funds raised that directly support the group's legal work. (White told *GCN* that the accusation that only 20 percent of NGRA's \$1.6 million annual budget goes into the program was untrue. He said "at our worst we're at 57 percent.") In addition, criticisms have also been raised about the group's involvement in non-legal projects, especially since most of its fundraising appeals ask for money based on NGRA's legal work.

In her resignation letter, O'Leary said "It comes as no surprise to me that these baseless attacks are made upon a woman in a powerful and wealthy national organization, and that these attacks focus on events and issues such as NCOD [National Coming Out Day], Medical Manhattan Project and the Dukakis campaign — issues meant to broaden the impact and effectiveness of NGRA beyond and [sic] exclusive litigative approach."

End of an era

William Pratt, the director of operations at NGRA, said O'Leary's departure was entirely voluntary and that "Jean saw that the

situation simply wasn't workable for her and the organization." White also told *GCN* that O'Leary had not been asked to leave, but instead saw "that continuing would be very damaging to the organization." O'Leary did not return *GCN*'s call by press time.

White said that O'Leary's departure represents the "end of an era for NGRA" — an era that has been marked by the group's becoming one of the most effective gay income-generating organizations in the country.

Pratt, White and Graff all told *GCN* the process of evaluation of NGRA's past practices, priorities, and future direction will continue. White said the group's plans to expand geographically (which include opening a Washington office) are still in place.

When asked whether O'Leary's departure might pave the way for some former employees to rejoin the organization — particularly the ousted lawyers — Pratt, White and Graff all said that NGRA is not ruling out any option. Graff said he is definitely leaving the organization to go into private practice once he has completed his term as interim executive director. Graff, also named to the board of directors, will remain on the board after his departure from the staff.

White said Graff's position as legal director is expected to be filled by David Bryant, formerly of the Texas Human Rights Fund, a gay legal group. Goldstein told *GCN* she had been grappling with the question of whether she would accept a job again with NGRA, if it were offered, but her decision would depend in part on how the restructuring of the organization goes. Goldstein stressed that O'Leary's resignation is only part of the solution to NGRA's problems.

"I don't think the story's over," said Goldstein. "The departure of Jean O'Leary is not the end of the concerns with the organization."

In addition to pledging to continue to evaluate the practices and direction of NGRA, its leadership is also claiming new mechanisms for input and feedback from staff and members will be developed. Graff has said the staffing of the legal department will be a "team approach." In addition, the expansion of the board of directors (from 15 to 25) will include a more open nomination process, according to Graff. He also said he hopes to create a more cooperative atmosphere between NGRA staff and the board of directors by instituting a policy of open board meetings, where staff are encouraged to attend.

When asked about the impact the conflict has had on NGRA's public image, Graff acknowledged "There has been a little damage." He said that "With Jean O'Leary's departure it sets the stage for us to repair that damage."

Some observers of the NGRA controversy have said the group's problems are not unlike those faced by other non-profit, public interest organizations. For the San Francisco-area lesbian and gay community, the NGRA scandal is reminiscent in some ways to the upheaval that rocked a local AIDS service organization, the Shanti Project, over a year ago. Like NGRA, the organization came under intense public scrutiny when internal rifts were aired. Like NGRA, Shanti's powerful head, Jim Geary, was at the center of the controversy.

In addition to urging a thorough examination of NGRA, some lesbians and gay men have called for a look at how the institutions that represent and are supported by lesbian and gay communities are responsive to those constituencies. Cindy Bologna, former volunteer coordinator at NGRA, said the people running gay organizations need to be accountable as well. "We have no way of evaluating our leaders," said Bologna. "Some leaders are smart enough to quit when they're tired and some aren't."

□ filed from Boston

ACT UP pickets the AAC on World AIDS Day, Dec. 1

Continued on page 7

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In review of 'Your Life Story'

Dear GCN:

I wish to thank Steve Rose and *Gay Community News* for the highly complimentary assessment of *Your Life Story by someone else* (Nov. 12-18, 1989). Your kind words are greatly appreciated. However, certain issues raised by the article need to be addressed.

First, the review of *Your Life Story by someone else* does not mention the lesbian and gay artists who created the arresting graphics that make the book a success. Mary Patten, the designer of the book, should be particularly praised; a great deal of the writing would be unintelligible without the visual clues her illustration and graphic design provided. An important fact about my life story — and yours if you are part of the movement to fight AIDS — is the exciting collaboration with lesbians that has brought new friendship and meaning in what we do together. The artists and I hoped that readers of *Your Life Story by someone else* would see it as an embodiment of this new possibility.

Second, I regret the negative comparisons Steve Rose draws between my work and the other books reviewed in the article. The real words of People with AIDS published in *Epitaphs for the Living* are to be treasured. Despite the desires of us AIDS activists to create a positive, affirming stance toward AIDS, each person is entitled to make

his/her own life and death. We have all had to create a response out of the same fears and struggles for equanimity as the contributors to *Epitaphs*. And my main criticism of *Poets for Life* is that the editor asked only famous people. *Bloodstream* is a novel; none of us novelists and poets would be safe if we were criticized on just political grounds. But the main problem for me is the implied competition: I want people to like my writing because it's good, not because the other books are bad.

Steve, I do not mean to attack you for liking *Your Life Story*. I share some of your feelings about books that exploit suffering in this epidemic, but I think we have to make space for all the ways our friends deal with AIDS. Anyway, the truth will be told not just in books, but in what we do to fight for real lesbian and gay life in the face of hatred and disease.

Love,
Ferd Eggan
Chicago, Ill.

Boston Women's Community Radio to break for 1990

Dear GCN:

As many GCN readers know, Boston Women's Community Radio has for many years produced an annual day of programming by and about women, in celebration of International Women's Day. The program has always included music, news and commentary, poetry and politics from diverse corners of women's communities locally and internationally. Last year the primary focus of the program was Women and AIDS.

Our goal has always been to work as allies with women who do not have access to the mainstream airwaves. We have tried to provide a forum where women could speak for themselves about the issues that concern them. As a radical feminist radio collective we wanted to use the airwaves to expose injustice in American society and throughout the world. We are proud of what we have accomplished over the years, both in terms of the many programs we have produced and the personal and political connections we have made.

This year, Boston Women's Community Radio has decided that we cannot produce the International Women's Day program. The reasons are, of course, complex. Among the factors contributing to our decision are changes in our personal and work lives, and the decreased availability of studio space. The group is not disbanding, but it is reevaluating how we will function and the kinds of radio projects we will work on in the future.

As you can imagine, after 11 years of being involved in the IWD project, coming to the decision to take this year off was difficult. Anyone who wishes to discuss how we came to the decision, or to talk about the obstacles we as a group have encountered trying to keep alive a project as ambitious as IWD radio, is welcome to write us. Write: Boston Women's Community Radio, c/o Zimberg, 172 Fayerweather St., Cambridge, MA 02138.

We want to thank everyone in the community who has supported our work. We received financial support over the years from The Boston Women's Fund, Haymarket, Resist, the Astraea Foundation, and many individuals. Hundreds of women have participated in the event each year, producing programs, designing our poster, putting up the posters, making food, decorating the studio, and calling up during the day with comments, criticisms and ideas. Special thanks to 88.1, WMBR at MIT, for making the annual day of women's programming possible. We are currently talking with other Boston-area women radio producers about their creating some form of radio event in celebration of IWD in 1990. Stay tuned, and again, we appreciate all your support.

Melanie Berzon
Eileen Bolinsky
Madge Kaplan
Tatiana Schreiber
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Abby Zimberg
Boston, Mass.

Gay Community News is produced by a collective dedicated to providing coverage of events and news in the interest of gay and lesbian liberation. The collective consists of a paid staff of ten, a general membership of volunteers, and a board of directors elected by the membership.

Opinions reflected in "editorials" represent the views of the paid staff collective. Signed letters and columns represent the views and opinions of the authors only. We encourage all readers to send us comments, criticism, and information, and to volunteer and become members.

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Speculations about why we're gay

Dear GCN:

I was reading recently reports of speculation in a men's health magazine as to why we're gay. It seems that according to their best guess, our mother's drank too much coffee or alcohol, took drugs, or were under stress during the period of our conception.

Underlying all this speculation is, of course, the big slur: we're some kind of unnatural or abnormal product, outside humanity and their religions. Yet, we are here within nature certainly in the form of human beings.

Their hateful gods, however, which they use to ever clobber our bodies and minds, are invisible and unseen. Yet with them in the various ideas about them, American society continues much cruelty.

A better study it seems to me could be about why some heteros are so wild-eyed obsessed with us, their hate, the kind of leaders they choose to follow in their greed and prejudice, and their need for someone to persecute.

Maybe it was *their* mothers who drank too much coffee and wine, popped too many pills, or suffered stress during their pregnancies. How else to account for some of them?

Zane Gilstrap
Joshua Tree, Calif.

Who are we that can be ashamed of our loving?

Dear GCN:

I watch and read constantly of our struggle against our plastic, blind-justiced foe. AIDS is at full run. We're speaking of millions of lives at stake, and we seem to be (are!) casting them aside, allowing them to suffer and lose self-respect, saying that it's too bad to be poor.

Of course it would be too much to ask people to go out in the cold and do something to help change a warhead into some medical care. Who are we that we are ashamed of our loving, our pleasures; afraid to say what we want?

To society we're sick animals. To us we're a breed of people with a sexual desire that offers us a pleasure we like better. Our progress is blocked by plastic people who constantly try to push us into the gutters as outcasts, but some of us refuse. We are face to face. We must not take a step backwards or we allow them to take a step forward.

I don't get your paper directly. Someone in this confinement area removes his name and forwards it to me. I would like this letter printed for his eyes as well. For a person to seek friendship he must make his intentions known. If you look and don't see what you're looking for, look again. It should come naturally.

Sincerely, one of the underestimated believers in his own struggle, for the simple purpose of justice and the right to be what I wish, and not what you wish to call me,

Jimbow Angelo Vonn
042287 — Box 87
1150 SW Allapattah Rd
Indiantown, FL 34956

Take off the wrapping

Dear GCN:

I'm a new subscriber, since the middle of October, and I really appreciate the important news I receive that is ignored in the straight press, including news on the Massachusetts gay rights bill — it shows how slanted the networks and "traditional" press are to not have reported its passage. I have one small gripe, however.

When I go to get my mail, I always pull out your newspaper wrapped in an ordinary, carefully marked brown paper bag. Nobody knows what I'm taking home, and this gives the paper an underground, illegal look. I think that's fine for those of us who haven't come out yet or have to hide our orientation for practical purposes, but what about those of us who are completely out? The wrapping seems to give a look of shame and a wanting to hide who we are. Wouldn't it be better if we could state on our subscriptions whether we want this cover or not? It may mean more paperwork and more man-(and woman-) hours to package and sort, but wouldn't it be worth it to let our mail-carriers, passerby and fellow citizens in the post offices know that we are everywhere? It might also cut down on GCN budget needs

by reducing the number of envelopes purchased.

Scott Stelzer
Wisconsin Rapids, Wi.

They can't keep me away from my Stink

Dear GCN:

I want to speak out on both the system and the prisoners, especially our so-called 'stubs' (lesbians). Now check me out, here we have the category of the situational homo who 'bulldogs' only because of their confinement. Then we have the desperate homo who gives up 'head service' for a bar of soap and some Buglar to smoke. Then we must not forget the Blatant Homos, which are very rare, and other than myself, I know of only three others in this category here.

Most of these women service each other sexually one day and file a claim to the three F's ruling for penitentiary 'turn outs' the next: Find ya! Fuck ya! and then Forget ya!

You would expect that we would stick together more in here, but no way Pete! They lie and snitch on each other and so the system has even more control over us by playing us off against each other. And the quantity of biasness (racism) in here would shock the honorable Ms. Rosa Parks.

I've not yet figured out why human beings can be so inhuman to one another. How do you spit it out on paper, the loneliness, the frustration and bitterness that are our constant companions, because of all the things that people (inside and out) do, and don't do (that you would expect, or hope for)?

Can anyone understand when I walk past a nice girl's assigned sleeping area and you feel a chill because of the clots of blood remaining from the slashed wrists, slashed because she couldn't find herself anymore. Ask yourself this question: how much do I understand of myself? Could I lose myself in some situations? Am I not aware of when they strip my self-respect and treat me as a mindless little fool every time a bell rings or a whistle blows?

I can see the shells forming as I engulf myself within the clutches of many layers of rigid rebelliousness. Why? Because it serves as a shield for mental protection and strength to keep one's sanity.

Trying to make it back to the world, to those loved ones who have done your time with you day for day, it's hard to keep ones equilibrium among the bitterness.

Well, I've learned that in this world of confinement everybody needs somebody, friend or lover. I was at the end of my rope, literally, and the doctor's theory of giving you dope to cope was useless. But I found my brown-eyed girl, who has softened the tones and the rigid edges for me. The system goes out of its way to keep us from each other, but these ole walls ain't high enough and this ole world ain't round enough to keep me away from my Stink!

Thanks for letting us tell our stories,
Glenda 'Cocoa' Edwards
403472
Rt 4, Box 800
Gatesville, TX 76528

An open letter to Fidel Castro

[GCN received a translation of this letter published in the newsletter of the Brazilian International Association on AIDS. — Ed.]

Comrade Fidel Castro,

I am writing to you as a comrade rather than as the leader of the admirable Cuban people. I want to speak to you as if I were meeting you on one of the trails of the Latin-American revolution in the '60s, our boots still covered with mud, hope strengthening our arms, and our souls filled with the words of the comrade who said it was possible to change the world and make it more beautiful.

I was a militant guerilla, a convinced follower of Che. Today I am one of those Brazilians with AIDS. I have the misfortune to live in a country where health care has been neglected during the last few decades. The AIDS epidemic has not been taken seriously by our authorities, and even today, even though Brazil is one of the countries most affected by this disease, there is nothing resembling a national program to control the spread of AIDS or to assist the sick. Furthermore, old prejudices against homosexuals have led to new taboos which have made the victim of AIDS a marginalized person — a legally dead person, in fact, with

SUSTAIN GCN!

Every week, when *Gay Community News* subscribers open that famous, plain wrapper, they know they will encounter timely news stories, provocative letters to the editor, and entertaining and informative features.

For the last year, *GCN* subscribers have had something extra to anticipate every month — special supplements devoted to a particular theme. Alternating with our highly regarded book review section, we've run special sections on Black History Month, Lesbian and Gay Health, Pride's 20th Anniversary, International Women's Day, Leather, and our on-going series — the PWA Journals.

What you might not know is that a special group of *GCN* readers called Sustainers have made these supplements possible through regular contributions to the paper.

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Sustainers are members of a special donor program. They pledge \$10 or more each month with the understanding that their contributions will be set aside for a special project. In 1989, Sustainers have collectively raised over \$10,000, knowing that their

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Nancy Wechsler
Gordon Gottlieb
Shelley Mains
For the *GCN* Sustainer Committee

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no fundamental human rights. Since I discovered that I have AIDS, I have struggled to prove that I am alive and that I am not suffering from any defect which prevents me from exercising my civil rights. To that extent I have agreed to be the symbolic candidate for President of the Green Party, in order to alert Brazilian society to the fundamental political themes in the construction of democracy as a system where people exercise their rights to be different in the on-going struggle against all social inequalities.

I have watched with great sorrow the Cuban initiatives in relation to AIDS. It is precisely from Cuba that I expected leadership in search for a solution to this public health problem. Cuba could take pride in its health system. It could, that is, if it weren't for the way it treats those who test positive, whether sick or not, interning them in an isolation that has no medical justification, that is against all scientific direction and is a frontal assault on human rights.

Cuba has employed, in an abusive manner, compulsory testing and has imprisoned those who test positively. In this fashion, Cuba attempts to attack the virus by attacking those who are attacked by it. And Cuba is being destroyed by the ideological virus of prejudice and discrimination. There are no possible arguments to defend these attitudes except those that are based on the most reactionary forms of prejudice, especially against homosexuals.

In a short time, Cuba is certainly going to find out that these measures are ineffective:

the epidemic will not be defeated and the sick will turn into enemies more and more difficult to find. The only result will be the absurd suffering inflicted on persons who could easily contribute to the control of the epidemic as is happening in other countries.

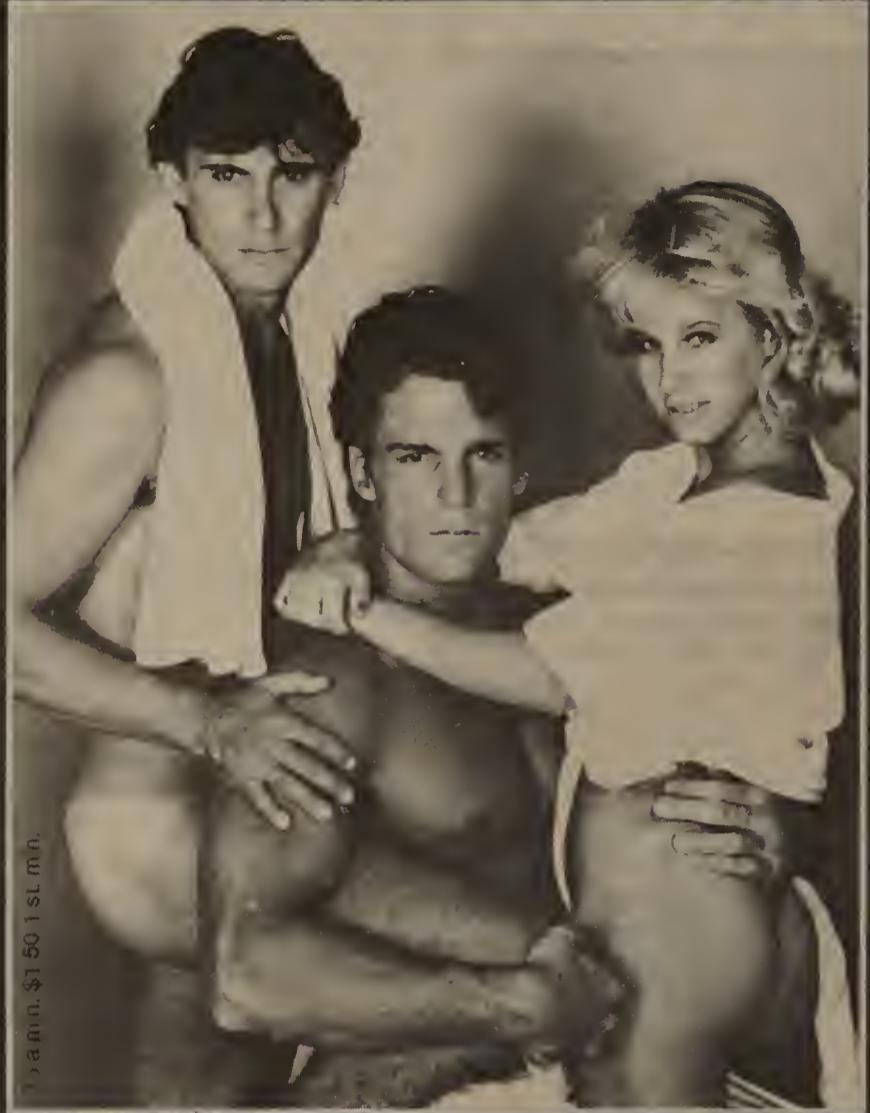
No matter what name is given to the concentration camps where those who carry the AIDS virus are imprisoned, the problem is that they are, in fact, political prisoners. On my own behalf, on behalf of the ten million carriers of the virus, their relatives and friends, and on behalf of all those who believe in life as an act of liberty, I urge you, comrade Fidel, to change the Cuban program on AIDS. In the first place, it is imperative that these political prisoners be freed. Secondly, it is imperative to establish a program based on the revolutionary principles of solidarity.

I sincerely hope that prejudice will not conquer Cuba.

Herbert Daniel
Rio de Janeiro, Brazil

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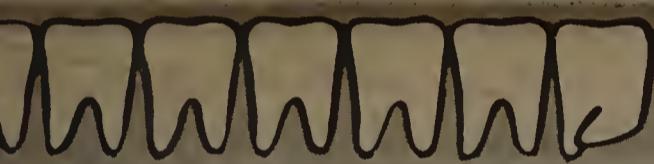
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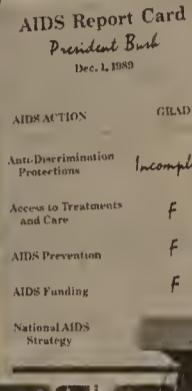
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THE TERRACE ROOM AT THE BOSTON PARK PLAZA



Jean McGuire of the AIDS Action Council presents a failing grade to Bush.

Protest organizers complained that male police officers frisked female protesters, fastened plastic handcuffs too tightly, and wore plastic gloves unnecessarily. But the organizers mixed seriousness with joiality. "We're here, we're queer, and we're not touring the White House," the protesters chanted as members of D.C.'s Oppression Under Target! (OUT!) snake-danced around peers whose arms were locked in affinity groups.

As the arrestees were being loaded into three busses, the remaining demonstrators taunted the large police contingent. "They'll see you on the news," they chanted. "Your gloves don't match your shoes." □

Gay rights law

Continued from page 1
clearly, simply, and accurately."

If they get their petitions, opponents will have until mid-February to collect the necessary 25,000 signatures. "They'll have their work cut out for them," said Canarias. "Our side has done its homework." □

Testing

Continued from page 3

going to vote on January 3rd," said AAC's Jim Voltz, "and I imagine that they are going to vote for it, and that we will wind up with a position very similar to the one ACT UP is calling for."

Access to resources

"It's ironic," AAC's Marianne Hughes told GCN, "that ACT UP objected to this process. The process has been very careful, very grassroots and democratic, as opposed to some that have been hierarchically arrived at. There was a tremendous amount of concern that we didn't tell people to go get tested, and then tell them that we didn't have the resources to deal with a positive test result."

"A number of provisions must be made to make this policy acceptable to the disenfranchised members of our community," AAC's Minority Community Liaison, Harold Dufour-Anderson told GCN. "Unless there are provisions taken to ensure confidentiality, refugees and undocumented immigrants run the risk of being deported and discriminated against" because the policy of the U.S. Immigration and Naturalization Service is to deport immigrants who are HIV positive.

"And many, if not most, refugees and immigrants do not have the benefit of health insurance because many people work under the table," Dufour-Anderson said. "Also, we run up against the problem of providing accurate translation. There is at least one

Continued on page 11

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DRAWING THE LINE

LESBIAN SEX AND ART: WHAT DO YOU LIKE, HOW DO YOU DECIDE?

"Drawing the Line" was produced by Kiss and Tell, a collaboration between three Vancouver, B.C. artists — Persimmon Blackbridge (sculptor), Susan Stewart (photographer), and Emma Stonebridge (writer/graphic designer). The exhibit was first shown last year at Women in Focus, a women's gallery in Vancouver, Canada, as a series of black and white photographs of lesbian sexuality. Viewers were invited to mark directly on the wall, and "draw the line" wherever their own limits compelled them. The artists' statement that accompanies the exhibit reads, "This is part of a discussion (to use a ladylike term for this painful, angry long thing we're in) in the lesbian and feminist communities about sexual imagery, sexism, censorship, pleasure, violence, power, empowerment, and a few other odds and ends. We want women to use this work to look at what you like and don't like, how you decide, where your lines are uncertain, and where they're sure. Is there a line that to cross means you're on the other side? Is everyone on this side on the same side of the same line? We also hope you will find some of the pictures lovely and hot celebrations of lesbian sex."

Liz and I talked to Emma when she was in Boston recently about how she got into all this and what she thought it was all about. We were intrigued by the idea of an exhibit that would allow women to actually experience sexual imagery and respond to it, rather than continue on and on writing harsh and bitter criticism of one another's ideas and emotions. We want to see this discussion move on in an atmosphere of openness so we can begin to ask ourselves how and why we feel angry, sad, excited or even comforted by certain sexual images. We'd like to bring this exhibit to Boston! If anyone can help out locating appropriate gallery space, please contact us at *GCN*. Many thanks to Stephanie Poggi for her remarkable ability to take a long, unwieldy (but fun) conversation about sex and art and turn it into this very readable article.

Tatiana Schreiber

Note: "Drawing the Line" will show at a national lesbian conference in Australia in January, at the Toronto "Queer Culture" festival in April of 1990, at San Francisco Gay Pride, 1990 and at the Gay Games in Vancouver next August.

By Tatiana Schreiber and Liz Galst

Tatiana: Why don't you first explain how you came to do this project?

Emma: Well, Susan and Persimmon and I had formed a group about art and sex. We spent a few meetings talking about what we did — in bed and in art, and what we thought the issues were. And then we did a bunch of projects, including a couple of photo shoots with Susan, who is a photographer. And then, all of a sudden, someone we knew was organizing a show at Women in Focus Gallery. It was planned for August 1988. There were going to be sex performances and they wanted to have something on the walls. So we were taking pictures wildly.

When we first started taking the pictures, we talked about how it seemed that every time anyone came up with any lesbian sexual imagery, someone would say, "But this doesn't represent what I do, and so it's bad." That was a problem, we thought, because no one person could ever represent what every one did.

At the same time we were preparing for the show, this woman did a poster for International Lesbian Week in *Angles*, our local lesbian paper [see poster, this page]. And there was a lot of controversy about that. There were women who said that it destroyed their pride in being a lesbian and it made them feel bad about Lesbian Week.

Tatiana: What was the image?

Emma: It was a series of closely cropped images of women having sex. We felt like there was no room for people to talk about how they felt about the image. You couldn't say "I like it." You had to say whether "I feel like it had a right to exist" or not.

Some people were saying, "Of course there's nothing wrong with sexual imagery, but that wasn't well-crafted." God, not only do you have to have the courage to make it, but it has to be well-crafted or else you're



not allowed to produce. You can't show it unless it's perfect or beautiful.

Another really offensive thing that happened around that poster was that the gay men's bars refused to carry that issue of *Angles*. They said the images were disgusting. I don't think they thought the images were sexist — I think they hated women's bodies.

Anyway, we thought that probably if women had a chance to just react to images, they might react very differently than how they thought they *should* react. A lot of women hadn't seen lesbian sexual imagery at all. And we were also interested in just creating nice pictures.

Originally, we thought we would arrange the images from least controversial to most controversial and in the middle would be ambiguous images; if you had a set of criteria for what is an offensive image, you would have trouble deciding. We would ask women to draw lines right on the walls showing beyond what point they thought these images shouldn't be allowed to exist or shouldn't be publicly displayed. We just thought there would be all these lines and we would take a picture of the lines and we would know where the community was at!

[laughter]

And then we thought, "Well, of course they can write comments if they *want*." As it turned out, only a few people drew lines. It was interesting, considering how much time we spent in the porn/anti-porn debate deciding where we "draw the line." But I guess that's not what women really want to do. By and large, everybody just wrote, wrote, wrote on the wall. Men had a separate comment book for them to write in.

This might be attributing too much to the show, but I think a lot of women who haven't had a chance to speak — because they aren't the leader of some part of the movement — got a chance to tell everybody what they had to say.

Tatiana: How did you decide to use just you and Persimmon as models, and not try to be more inclusive of a variety of women?

Emma: We decided to use the two of us because we're asking people to make judgments about different sorts of images, and we felt that if the same two models were in all the images, they would be making judgments about the *images* — and not about the models. The other thing is that we figured there was just no way we could represent all different sorts of lesbians, and that tokenism was right around the corner.

There's no lesbian sexual imagery, so there's this pressure on you if you're making it, to make it all.

Liz: I want to talk about the issue of representation, because for me, the show is a lot about that, and not a lot about sex. Because I don't really care what most people do in bed. I care to the extent that I think it would be really nice if everyone felt really empowered in bed and people weren't abused in bed. But when I first heard about the show, it was interesting to me because it was about representation.

Emma: Well, we thought it was about representation when we made it, that's for sure. One of the main ideas of the show is that there isn't very much lesbian sexual imagery. And the more we make pictures, the more I realize we've just scratched the surface. While there is lots of room for improvement, I can't really believe at this point that anyone would have the audacity to tell anybody that any lesbian-made sexual image shouldn't be there. Because there's nothing — there's not any scale, there's not any range, there's nothing.

Anyway, we felt the show was a lot about how you feel about images being represented, whether you will tolerate images of something you would never do, whether you will tolerate images of something you think no one should do, whether you like images of something you would hate to do, what you get turned on by. And we were also interested in the strange fact that there's erotica — which is lovely, but not a turn-on — and porn, which is difficult but arousing. We wanted to figure that out.

Liz: The people who wrote on the walls, did they deal with the issue of representation?

Photographs from 'Drawing the Line' by Susan Stewart



NINE SHOT



INTERNATIONAL LESBIAN WEEK OCTOBER 5 to 11, 1987

The controversial poster originally printed in 'Angles' for 1987 International Lesbian Week, by Li Yuen and the Vancouver Lesbian Network (reprinted from 'Rites')

Emma: Some of them did. There seemed to be a lot of confusion about what we ended up calling "the S/M wall." A lot of discussion ended up being about sex, and not about the images — even though there were women who were writing, "These are only pictures. The women who made these pictures are not being exploited." This raised issues for me because the anti-porn movement has been saying that women who work in the porn industry are exploited. A lot of women who work in the porn industry say, "We're exploited, but not much more than the average waitress." So, is the image only exploitative if the women were exploited in making it? Or can women who weren't exploited make exploitative imagery? What is exploitative imagery, anyway? I don't know the answers to any of those questions.

Liz: What I think is exploitative imagery has to do with what I don't like about most heterosexual porn — which is, that there is this staged thing going on, and it's supposed to make the men who view it come. For me, the fact that it's not genuine and that it has nothing to do with the pleasure of the woman in the picture is what's exploitation. And it creates these new levels of expectation of what women should do to please men — which are in turn exploitative. I also think it's exploitative that most people who work in that industry get paid shit and have terrible working conditions.

Your pictures are different because you and Persimmon are not engaged with the camera at all, and you have a lot of control over what's in the pictures. Your pictures aren't just a voyeur relationship between the consumer and the person in the picture. The lesbian porn I like the most is about an individual woman's experience of sex. In general, I don't think photography is very good in terms of portraying people's internal experiences.

Tatiana: You mentioned at the beginning that lesbians need a chance to just react to images, to open up a wider range of feelings — than just being shocked or turned on. What feelings did the show open up in people?

Emma: It opened up a whole range. Some of them we were prepared for — like for some women to feel some of the images were anti-feminist. Women wrote, "S/M: the big lie" over some of the pictures, or one woman wrote, "I can see the boys have taught you well." "Macho B.S.," someone else wrote. There was one woman who wrote that she

had just come out and she came to the show to find out what people did in bed, which I thought was great. There were a lot of women who wrote they were just glad to see the images, period. There were women who wrote things like, "Oooh, this makes me wet."

Here are some: "I found this a real turn-on — when I first glanced at it, I actually felt a hand caressing me." Then there's, "Too bad you didn't stop here. The next wall offends me to the core." And, "Some of these images make me uncomfortable, but you know, I want to look. I can't draw lines on it."

Tatiana: Did the pictures you thought would be the most controversial turn out to be?

Emma: Yes, but there were some surprises. For example, there was one image where I have my fist inside Persimmon, and she's wearing stockings and a garter belt, and a skirt. And no one seemed to think it was a big deal that it was an image of me with my fist inside her. But the garter belt and stockings...there was lots about "Why is she wearing that?" I thought that was kind of funny.

We did one series that had a motorcycle and a dildo and was in a parking lot. We thought of dildos as having a fine and long history in the lesbian community — but a lot of people were very upset by that.

Then there were some other surprising things. One woman wrote, "I see men in all these pictures." It was really clear to me that sexual imagery for her was really linked up with the straight porn industry.

Liz: I understand her reaction because it's really hard for me to look at the lesbian sex industry without comparing it to the straight porn industry. Partly that's because some lesbian porn is exactly like straight porn — so I make this association. There are things in lesbian porn I may have liked if I hadn't seen them in this institution of straight porn that I really hate.

Tatiana: Like that woman who saw a man in every single picture even though she knew there was no man in any of the pictures and she knew it was geared toward a women's audience. And didn't you tell me that one woman said 50 percent of the images were S/M pictures?

Emma: Whereas only 12 pictures were, about 20 percent.

Tatiana: I have a question about how people reacted to the level of involvement you two models seemed to exhibit in the pictures. Did people have feelings about whether they saw any expression on your faces, or whether they couldn't see someone's face?

Emma: Well, we're not lovers —

Tatiana: And yet, don't you think many people in the audience want to feel there's something there — even though they know you're not lovers. That some lesbians feel there is a need to have a caring, emotional relationship happening if you're having sex?

Emma: Yeah, there is a level where it would be acceptable to have a good friend come in and take a picture of you and your lover having sex — but it's not so acceptable for two women who aren't lovers to have sex with a camera over and over and over again. Like many, many times. [laughter]

We didn't get comments about our relationship, but some women did want personality pictures, or love pictures. There was love in those pictures, but they're sex pictures, not romance pictures.

We responded to a lot of comments on the walls about what was missing, and we are also trying to take more pictures that show that sex is not always a positive experience. Or even if it's positive in the sense that it's a growing experience, it's not always happy, happy, happy. We've also been taking more troubling pictures. Like a series at a radio station where I'm at the controls and Persimmon is on the other side of the glass, stripping. The camera is behind me, so she's interacting a lot with the camera. You can see someone else in the studio with me, so it's very exhibitionist.

I think it's troubling in the sense that you couldn't classify it as two loving lesbians in bed, even getting carried away a little bit.

Tatiana: You really have to acknowledge that it's people trying to turn each other on.

Emma: And that you can be turned on by someone who is inaccessible to you, like on the other side of the glass.

Tatiana: I wonder if there's a way of conveying something like one person wanting to have sex and the other person not wanting to. It's scary for me to even think about it. Or what about trying to convey the image of starting to have sex and then losing interest — or having a flashback of some bad experience.

both. I remember an argument I had with a woman about the *Angles* poster, and she said, "Why did this woman make these images? What was she trying to say about lesbians?" And I said, "Well, maybe she made them as a turn-on." She said, "What kind of thing is that?" I said, "Sometimes, I just want to look at something and get turned on." And she said, "You learned that from your father." [laughter] I did not learn that from my father — I learned that for myself.

There is more and more lesbian sex writing and sex pictures all the time — it's almost like there's this pressure to like it. But there is also a lot of the lesbian community that feels there's something wrong with just doing something to get turned on. I guess I can't really see what's wrong with that.

Tatiana: You told me earlier that your feelings about modeling these pictures changed over time. How did they change?

Emma: At first I was very nervous that suddenly Persimmon and Susan were going to discover that I didn't really know how to have sex, that I was bad at it, or did weird things. As time went on, I realized that I was just fine, and if I did things that neither of them had ever seen before, that was fine, too. Very quickly you kind of lose your embarrassment about your body. So many people have seen my body — I just don't worry about it anymore.

Tatiana: So you lost not just your embarrassment about your body, but the feeling that there was something that was "normal" lesbian sex.

Emma: Now I have the reverse thing. I'm terrified that people are going to think I know how to do all these things I don't know how to do.

Tatiana: Do what I saw in picture number 6! [laughter] What other reactions were you nervous about?

Emma: We were worried that some of our friends who didn't like some of the images would hate us. That people would expect us to have all the answers to everything. And Susan was worried that people would think she was a pornographer.

Tatiana: Another question I have is how does this work fit into each of your broader political perspectives?



Emma: We would like to get at those things — they're hard. Also, I don't know where they would fit.

Liz: I want porn to do more than just be hot. I want it to be able to say that sex can be fabulous, but people also have trouble with it. I think a lot of people gloss over the hard things in trying to affirm lesbian desire.

Emma: Which is hard, because as I was saying, there are no pictures. So are you going to make pictures of *shitty sex*?

Tatiana: But people who write about various aspects of their experience don't only write about the happy aspects — they write about the miserable or depressing or lonely or tragic moments. On the other hand, if you did portray things like a woman being rejected or emotionally hurt, I might find that really difficult to look at.

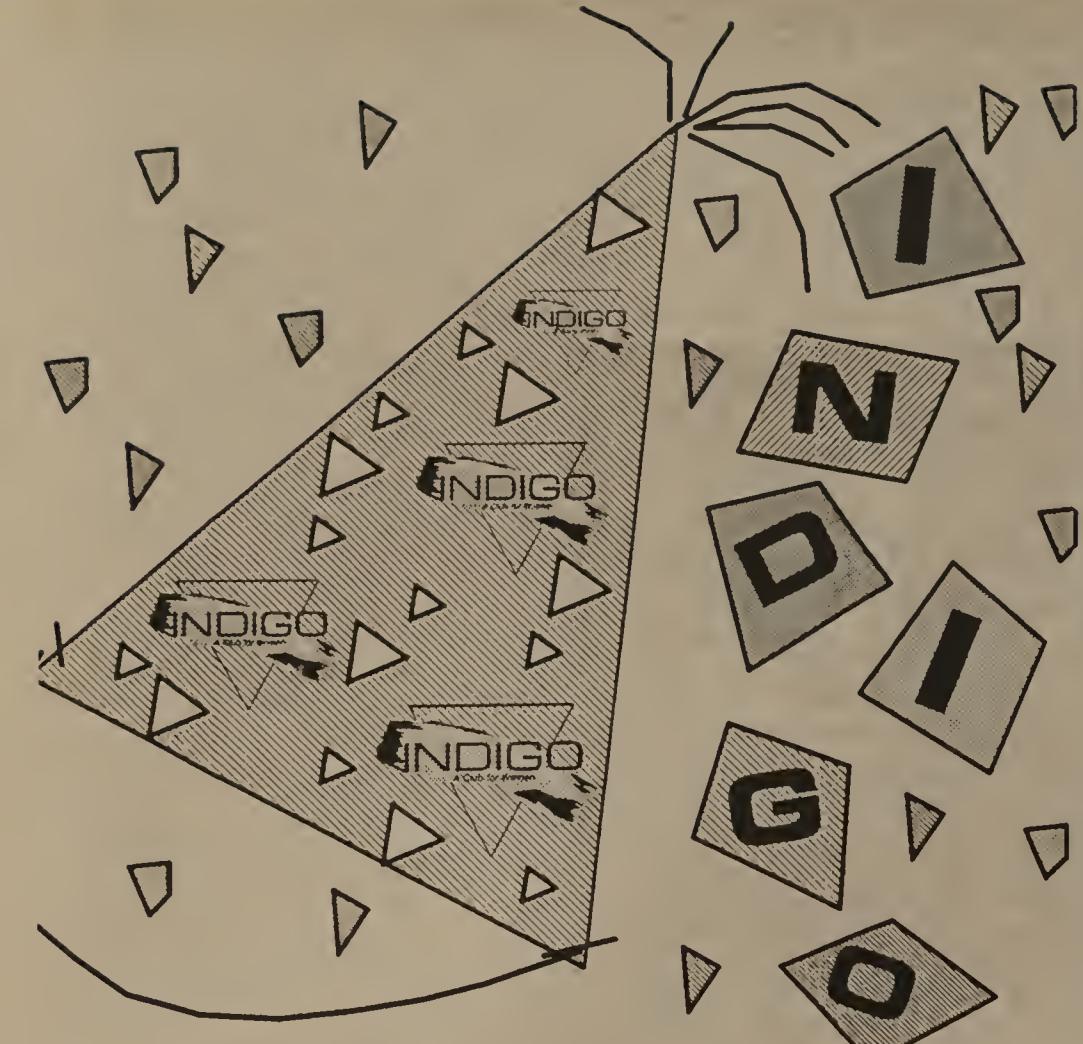
Emma: There's a part of me that is really drawn to porn — to making pictures and writing stories whose only mission in life is to turn us on. I guess you've got to have

Emma: We all see sex as an important issue — at least in the sense that a lot of people are hung up about it. And we feel that lesbian imagery is a very powerful, political thing. But all of us are involved in other things at the same time. Throughout this piece, which we worked on once or twice a month, Persimmon worked full-time on an art piece about women in prison — she works on it 9-5 p.m. every day. Susan works full-time and is a single mother.

For me personally, this piece is political because it relates so directly to the porn censorship debates. It's about how people feel about censorship and whether when confronted with an image you can really say "I would censor this." But even though I think this piece is important, I don't think it's going to change the world. As a matter of fact, I don't think lesbian sex is going to change the world. [laughter]

I do want to say one other thing about the porn debates and my own experience. When I first got involved in the women's movement, I suddenly found myself picketing porn shops. I could understand the anti-

Continued on page 11



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Drawing

Continued from centerspread

porn movement, but there was this part of me that remembered how important it was for me to read *Playboy* when I was ten years old. In an ideal world, I wouldn't say ten-year-old girls should be reading *Playboy*,



but I don't think it was bad for me either. It was good for me; it was the only place I could find out anything about sex.

So, I felt conflicted around that and I felt this huge pressure to have a position. That bugged me.

Tatiana: One other question I have is do you think the exhibit can really change what women are willing to do sexually?

Emma: I think it can have that effect on some women. Some women might not have realized that some things are possible — "Oh, look at that!" — you know. There are some things in there that defy the laws of physics. I think some women were apprehensive ahead of time and then it wasn't so scary after all, to see women having sex. If you feel nervous about doing something different than what you've always done, and you see pictures of different things, you might feel that you can try more things.

When I first came out, no one would tell me what lesbians did in bed. They just said, "You'll know what to do." I didn't know what to do. No one had ever sucked my nipples before. I didn't know whether I should suck her nipples or not, I didn't know how long I should suck them for. I didn't know whether I could bite them — it never occurred to me to bite them. A lot of women never talk about sex, even with their lovers. They never say, "You can bite my nipples, if you want," or "I hate it when you do." It's good for people to see it. □

Tatiana Schreiber is a radio journalist who thinks sexual freedom should be high on the agendas of gay liberationists and other assorted revolutionaries.

Liz Galst wishes she didn't have to think of something clever to say at the end of these articles.

Testing

Continued from page 7

site where there are translators for Haitian Creole, but for Asian languages — Laotian, Vietnamese — we have a problem."

Other agencies

The Massachusetts Department of Public Health is currently considering a similar policy. "We will be releasing an advisory to physicians on HIV testing and counseling in early January," said Duane Draper, Director of the Massachusetts Department of Public Health's AIDS Office. "Previously, we haven't said much — as long as there was no demonstrated treatment for AIDS, there wasn't much point."

When asked about people who do not have access to health care, Draper told *GCN* that DPH "doesn't have any evidence that people are being rejected from access" to physicians. "As a Department of Public Health, we have an obligation to advise providers with information about standards of care. You can only do the best you can do. We advise poor women in Lawrence to get pre-natal care, even when we know not all of them can do that," he said.

Other Boston AIDS groups and health care providers offer largely similar perspec-

tives. The Boards of Directors of both the Latino Health Network and the Multicultural AIDS Coalition are in the process of drawing up policies about HIV testing. Both are proceeding slowly in order to accurately gauge their communities' positions on testing.

"I personally favor testing so that people can deal with results of that test, and so that people can get treatment early," Orlando DelValle, Executive Director of the Latino Health Network, told *GCN*. "But early intervention means that the resources are available, that people can get counseling, can get into protocols and treatment, and that's not necessarily true."

"In communities of color, we can't spend a second of our time arguing about testing. We have got to give people information to empower them," said Wayne Wright, Executive Director of the Multicultural AIDS Coalition. "It's like the plane going down in Scotland — some people had the information that the plane was targeted to go down, and did something about it. Other people, working with the information they had, got on that plane, and they died.

"The system has never done a good job being responsive to our cultures, our language barriers. We need to be asking: What can we do to shore up the system so that it is as responsive as possible? People need to know that there is something out there [AIDS] that is bigger than you think it is, closer to you than you think it is.



ACT UP members display leaflets and signs in front of AAC on World AIDS Day, Dec. 1

"When we talk about encouraging people to be tested, we're not talking about handing out flyers at the [subway system's] Orange Line. People must have pre- and post-test counseling, and we need to be able to get people information that there is a safe and secure network of support" to help them deal with a positive test result. Wright said that while no such thing exists now, people should still be encouraged to get tested.

"We will see these people. We will see them when they are HIV positive, or we will see them when they have full-blown AIDS and are sick," said Wright

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Room and shared first floor in quiet spacious Victorian home with professional lesbian couple. Washer/dryer, dishwasher, near T. Rent \$350 or negotiate help with housecare, errands, childcare with our 16 month old child. Call Loraine 254-5929. (22)

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Large bedroom and study for each person (two rooms) plus main house. W/D, driveway, near T, nice neighborhood. \$450 per month per person. Call Joe 884-5613 or leave message. (22)

3 LF looking for 4th for Belmont home. Friendly, independent, household. No drugs/smoke. Near bus line. \$295-plus. Available late Dec./Jan. Call Sara/Kate 484-5319. (22)

2 lesbian roommates over 30 wanted for 9 room house Bridgewater. Quiet neighborhood. Parking, yard. N smokers, or drinkers please. Vegetarian preference. Available now: \$350/mth plus utilities. Cathy (617) 282-7227. (22)

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GW GM. Couples or singles. Privacy on 75 acres. Between Boston and Providence. Off of 495, Norton, call (508) 285-9849. No more pets. (22)

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Harvard Med. School Area: Large sunny 4 room apartment for rent. Renovated 2nd floor on a quiet street. Perfect for a couple. Prefer nonsmokers. \$600.00/month plus utilities. Available: December. Call 445-0132. (23)

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PUBLICATIONS

BREAKTHROUGH!

Political journal of Prairie Fire Organizing Committee, Spring 1989 issue. Women of the Philippine Revolution — Interview with Makibaka; The Post-Feminist Mystery; speech by PISD (People with Immune System Disorders); Crack and Black Youth. \$3 including postage. John Brown Book Club, POB 1422, San Francisco, CA 94114.

Do you need facts about menopause? Does the stereotyping of older women make you angry? Do you want to be part of an Older Feminists Network? *Broomstick*, a bimonthly national magazine by, and about women over forty. Annual subs (US funds only) U.S. \$15, Canada \$20, Overseas and Institutions \$25. Sliding scale available. Sample copy \$3.50. 3543 18 St. #3, San Francisco, CA 94110.

BAD ATTITUDE

A lesbian sex magazine. Irreverent and Hot! \$12 for one year's subscription (3 issues). B.A. Inc., P.O. Box 110, Cambridge, MA 02139. (16.33)

LESBIAN CONTRADICTION

A Journal of Irreverent Feminism. Quarterly of commentary, analysis, reviews, cartoons & humor by and for women who agree to disagree—who are still political, but not necessarily correct. Sample \$1.50; sub. \$6; more if/less if. LesCon, 584 Castro, No. 236G, SF, CA 94114. (ex)

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OFF OUR BACKS

Lively, down-to-earth feminism in the nation's oldest women's newsjournal. Analysis, reviews, conference coverage, and news — on health, feminist theory, reproductive rights, civil rights and political work among working, disabled, incarcerated, old, and poor women, women of color, lesbians and women from every continent, \$15/11 issues. \$6 plus \$1 postage. 2423 18th St. NW, Washington, DC 20009. (ex)

WOMEN OF POWER: "A Magazine of Feminism, Spirituality, and Politics," an inspiring international quarterly publication. Subscriptions \$22 for 4 issues; single issues \$6 plus \$1 postage. P.O. Box 827, Cambridge, MA 02238, telephone (617) 625-7885. (ex)

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The sexual entertainment magazine for lesbians, is 49 pages of erotic fiction, features, plus timely sexual advice and news columns. We are quarterly, national, unique and provocative. \$28/year sub/\$6 single issue. ON OUR BACKS, \$26 Castro, San Francisco, CA 94114(ex)

WOMEN'S REVIEW OF BOOKS

monthly review of current feminist writing. Since 1983. Our readers span the U.S., Canada, and abroad. Subscriptions: \$15/U.S., \$18/Canada, \$25/institutions. Free sample on request. THE WOMEN'S REVIEW, Wellesley Women's Research Center, Wellesley, MA 02181. (ex)

BLACK/OUT

Special 10th Anniv. edition of *Black/Out* now available. This bi/annual magazine from the National Coalition for Black Lesbians and Gays contains essays, reviews, poetry, news and announcements concerning the Black Lesbian and Gay community. Sample copy \$6 plus \$1 postage. 1 year subscription (2 issues) \$10 to BLACK/OUT, c/o NCBLG, 19641 West Seven Mile, Detroit, MI 48219. (ex)

ORGANIZATIONS

OLDER LESBIAN ENERGY

Social and support group for women over 40. P.O. Box 1214, East Arlington, MA 02174. (15.48)

BLACK AND WHITE MEN TOGETHER

Multiracial group for all people. Call (415) 431-1976 or write BWMT, suite 140, 584 Castro St. SF, CA, 94114. (16.1)

BOSTON ALLIANCE OF GAY AND LESBIAN YOUTH

Social support group for youth 22 and under. Wed. night general meeting from 7:30-9pm. New persons meeting at 6:00. Women's meeting at 6:45. Call 523-7363 for info. (15.32)

MAN/BOY LOVE

Intergenerational Love Support Group. World wide news, art, opinions. Application, information free. Bulletin \$1.00 NAMBLA, P.O. Box 174, New York, NY 10018 (7)

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9 Saturday **Sweet Honey in the Rock** perform at the Strand Theatre, 543 Columbia Rd., Dorchester. 8pm. \$18/\$15. Info: 282-8000.

Calendar listings must be received by the Monday before the week of the event. Photos encouraged. Please specify if event is/is not wheelchair accessible and/or sign language interpreted. Please use our format as a guide for listings and put each event on a separate sheet, if possible. Listings must be typed.

9 Saturday

Dorchester **Sweet Honey in the Rock**, the internationally acclaimed five-woman a cappella gospel group, perform at the Strand Theatre, 543 Columbia Road. 8pm. \$18/\$15. 282-8000.

Cambridge **Saphire-Uppity Women Blues** at Indigo, 823 Main Street. 8pm. \$8.50.

Jamaica Plain **Lesbian and Gay Neighbors of J.P.** sponsors a Flea Market and Bake Sale at the First Church Unitarian, 6 Eliot Street. Noon-5pm. Mike O., 524-0557.

Northampton **10th Annual Lesbian Homeshow** at the Northampton Center for the Arts. Also 12/10. 10am-5pm. \$1-3. Wheelchair accessible, sign language interpreted.

Boston **Chris Maxedon** exhibits his "Strangely Painted Furniture" at The Kingston Gallery thru 12/30. 129 Kingston Street, 2nd floor. Opening 6-9pm. Gallery hours, Wed.-Sun. 12-6pm. 423-4113.

10 Sunday

Jamaica Plain **Lesbian and Gay Neighbors of J.P.** hold annual potluck with entertainment by the Lesbian and Gay Freedom Trail Band. First Church Unitarian, 6 Eliot Street. 4pm. Kenn, 524-0833.

Boston **Fenway Community Health Center** holds open house for their new Wholistic Health Services. 338 Newbury Street. 11am-2pm. 267-0900.

Brookline **Am Tikva** ice skating at the Cleveland Circle MDC Rink. 1:30pm. 527-1741 for directions, 782-8894 for information.

Boston **Boston Unitarian Universalist Gays & Lesbians** sponsor an evening of movies and popcorn at the Arlington Street Church. 7pm.

Cambridge **Men of All Colors Together** presents its annual dinner called "A Gay Rights Christmas" at Harvard Yard's Phillips Brooks House. 1-5pm.

11 Monday

Boston **Celebration '90: Gay Games III**, general meeting and registration night at 1270 Boylston Street. 7:30pm. 288-1606.

12 Tuesday

Boston **Healing Services** for all affected by AIDS, sponsored by the Ecumenical Task Force on AIDS. At the Church of St. John the Evangelist, 35 Bowdoin Street (Beacon Hill). 7:30pm. 628-7665.

13 Wednesday

Boston **FCHC's Living Well Series**, "Creating the Holidays You Want!" with Rezakkah Norins. 332 Newbury Street. 6-7:30pm. Paul or Robb, 267-0900 to preregister.

Boston **New England Gay, Lesbian & Bisexual Veterans'**, Potluck Christmas Party at the Les/Gay Service Center, 338 Newbury Street. 8-10pm. Cliff, 723-8127.

Boston **Downtown Lesbians** Brown Bag Lunch. Noon. For more info: Julie, 725-3562.

Cambridge **Say it, Sister!** "Eating Disorders: A Multicultural Perspective." WMBR, 88.1 FM. 7-8pm.

Boston **Metropolitan Community Church** support group for people with AIDS, ARC or who are HIV positive. At the Les/Gay Service Center, 338 Newbury Street. 7:30pm. 437-0420.

14 Thursday

Boston **GCN Production Night**. All welcome. Proofreading starts at 5pm. Paste-up after 7pm. 62 Berkeley St., near Arlington and Back Bay T-stops. Info: GCN: 617/426-4469.

Boston **The Group**, a social/discussion group meets at the Les/Gay Service Center, 338 Newbury Street. 8pm. 266-1129.

Cambridge **Eve Goodman** and Doshie Powers perform at Christopher's, 1920 Mass. Ave. 8pm-midnight. \$5. 876-9180.

Boston **Holiday and Award Celebration Gala** to recognize groups and individuals who helped pass the lesbian and gay civil rights bill. At the Dome Room of the Hotel Lenox, 710 Boylston Street. 7-10pm. \$15 donation. Rich, 628-9650.

Boston **Boston Gay and Lesbian Alliance Against Defamation** meets at the Les/Gay Service Center, 338 Newbury Street. 8pm. 868-0416.

Boston **The Multicultural AIDS Coalition** holds its second Men of Color AIDS Information Group. At the Harriet Tubman House, 566 Columbus Ave. 7-9pm. For info: Victor Rivera, 536-0390.

Boston **GCN Mailing**. Come help stuff the paper and meet new friends. 5-10pm. 62 Berkeley St., near Arlington and Back Bay T-stops. Info: GCN, 617/426-4469.

Jamaica Plain **Crones' Harvest** presents lesbian retail store presents Karen Beth, lesbian singer/songwriter. 761 Center Street. 8pm. \$5. 983-9530, TTY-TDD 983-9529. Wheelchair accessible.

15 Friday

Boston **GCN Mailing**. Come help stuff the paper and meet new friends. 5-10pm. 62 Berkeley St., near Arlington and Back Bay T-stops. Info: GCN, 617/426-4469.

Boston **A Clean and Sober Dance** for the lesbian and gay community. Sponsored by The Boston Sound Machine. 140 Clarendon Street, at the Y. 9pm-1am. \$5.

New York City **Casselberry-DuPree** perform a concert to benefit Brooklyn Women's Martial Arts. At the Borough of Manhattan Community College, 199 Chambers Street. 8pm. \$15 in advance, \$20 at the door. 718/788-1775.

Boston **The Boston Lesbian & Gay Service Center** hosts an evening of Lesbian Fun and Games. 338 Newbury Street. 7-10pm. \$2 donation. 247-2927.

Maynard **West of Boston Lesbians** holds its Annual Holiday potluck party. 6:30pm. For info: Janis or Cec at 508/386-7737 or write P.O. Box 292, Marlboro, MA 01752.

16 Saturday

Jamaica Plain **Crones' Harvest**, presents lesbian singer/songwriter Laura Wetzel, 761 Center Street. 3pm. \$5. 983-9530, TTY-TDD 983-9529. Wheelchair accessible.

Boston **Boston Gay Men's Chorus** will perform at Jordan Hall, New England Conservatory. 3pm. \$18/\$14/\$9. Sign language interpreted.

Boston **Prime Timers**, an organization for older gay males, holds its Christmas party at The Claddagh Restaurant, 335 Columbus Ave. 6pm. For info: D. Bourbeau, 266-8625.

18 Monday

Boston **Coalition for Lesbian and Gay Civil Rights** holds biweekly meeting at the Les/Gay Service Center, 338 Newbury Street. 8pm. Rich, 776-6956.

19 Tuesday

Boston **Boston Gay Men's Chorus** in concert. Jordan Hall, New England Conservatory. 8pm. \$18/\$14/\$9. Sign language interpreted.

Boston **Gay Fathers of Greater Boston** meets to discuss "Gay Fathers on Television." At the Lindemann Center, 25 Staniford Street, Revere Room. 8-10pm. 742-7897.

20 Wednesday

Boston **FCHC's Living Well Series**, "Improving Health through Art" with Jana Levenson. 338 Newbury Street. 6-8pm. Paul or Robb at 267-0900 to pre-register.

Cambridge **Say it, Sister!**, "Lesbian/Gay Civil Rights Bill — Celebration." WMBR, 88.1 FM. 7-8pm.

21 Thursday

Boston **GCN Production Night**. All welcome. Proofreading starts at 5pm. Paste-up after 7pm. 62 Berkeley St., near Arlington and Back Bay T-stops. Info, GCN: 617/426-4469.

Boston **Bridges**, a gathering for remembrance and renewal for all people whose lives have been touched by AIDS. Sponsored by the AIDS Action Committee. At Faneuil Hall. 7pm.

Boston **The Group**, a social/discussion group meets for a "Holiday Party" at the Les/Gay Service Center, 338 Newbury Street. 8pm. 266-1129.

Jamaica Plain **Crones' Harvest** presents radical feminist author Mary Daly. 761 Center Street. 7:30pm \$5. 983-9530, TTY-TDD 983-9529. Wheelchair accessible.

22 Friday

Boston **GCN Mailing**. Come help stuff the paper and meet new friends. 5-10pm. 62 Berkeley St., near Arlington and Back Bay T-stops. Info: GCN, 617/426-4469.

Weekly events

Saturday

Boston **The Boston Area Rape Crisis Center** new training session for hotline. 617/492-RAPE.

Boston **Gay Boston**, with Jim Voltz. Boston Neighborhood Network, channels A3 and A8. 7:30-8pm.

Boston **Body Electric**: healing with group sensual massage for gay and bisexual men. 551 Tremont. 7:30pm. \$12. 522-9164.

Sunday

Boston **Boston Alliance of Gay and Lesbian Youth (BAGLY)**. Open to youth age 22 and under. 35 Bowdoin St. 2-5pm. 523-7363 or 1-800-42BAGLY.

Boston **Metro Healing** healing group for everyone. Metropolitan Health Club aerobics room, 209 Columbus Ave. 7:30-9:30pm. 426-9205.

Boston **The Gay Dating Show**, WUNR 1600 AM. 10:30pm-2:30am. Lesbians and Gay Men.

Boston **ALATEEN Group** open to lesbian, gay, and bisexual youth, 22 and under. 338 Newbury Street, rm. 202k. 6pm-7:30pm. Dave, 629-2518 or Frank, 666-8912.

Boston **Metropolitan Community Church** meets for worship and fellowship at 131 Cambridge Street. 7pm. 437-0420.

Monday

Cambridge **Healing Circle** group healing. 5 Upland Rd. 7:30-9:30pm. \$5 suggested. 864-1989.

Cambridge **Lesbian Rap**. 12/11 Women's Body Building. 12/18 Alternative Celebrations. Women's Center, 46 Pleasant St. 8-10pm. Free. 354-8807 (TTY/voice).

Tuesday

Boston **Gay Fathers of Greater Boston** meet 1st and 3rd Tues. of the month. Lindemann Ctr., 2nd fl. 8-10pm. 742-7897.

Boston **Gay and Lesbian Support Group for Adult Children of Alcoholics**. Faulkner Hospital. 8:30-10pm. Intake interview required. 522-5800 x1908.

Boston **Lesbian and Gay Freedom Trail Band**. No audition necessary. YWCA, 120 Clarendon St. 7:15pm. Kathy, 424-7025 or Gary, 267-6186.

Providence, RI **ACT UP/Rhode Island** open meetings. Rocket, 73 Richmond St. 7pm. 273-7228.

Boston **ACT UP/Boston** meets to confront the AIDS crisis. Gay and Lesbian Service Center, 338 Newbury Street, Rm. 203. 7pm. 49-ACT UP.

Cambridge **Bisexual Women's Rap**. 12/12 Psychological differences between relationships with men and relationships with women, 12/19 Ending a relationship and keeping a friendship. Women's Center, 46 Pleasant St. 7:30-10pm. 354-8807.

Cambridge **30-plus Lesbian Rap** 7-8:30pm. 12/12 Coming Out Stories, 12/19 Therapy stories. The Women's Center (see above).

Cambridge **Women For Sobriety**, a self help group for women recovering from addictions. Women's Center, 46 Pleasant St. 8-9:30pm. 354-8807

Arlington **Parents and Friends of Lesbians and Gays** meets on the second Tuesday of every month at First Parish Unitarian Church, 630 Mass. Ave. 7:15pm. Info: 547-2440 or 508/562-5807.

Wednesday

Boston **Boston Alliance of Gay and Lesbian Youth**. Open to youth age 22 and under. 35 Bowdoin St. New persons' meeting 6pm; women and men meet separately 6:45-7:30; general meeting at 7:30pm. 523-7363 or 1-800-42BAGLY.

Cambridge **Say it, Sister!** WMBR, 88.1 FM. 7-8pm.

Boston **Women's Self-Defense Classes** sponsored by Women's Self Defense Collective. Studio 3, 731 Harrison Ave., 2nd floor. 6-8pm. \$10-\$35 sliding scale per mo. 625-1115.

Cambridge **Lesbian Al-Anon** with childcare. Women's Center (see above). 6:30-8pm.

Thursday

Northampton **Valley Gay Alliance** meets 1st, 3rd Th. every month, basement of the Unitarian Church, 22 Main St. 7:30pm. 413/527-5310.

Stoneham **Incest Survivors Group** for women. New England Memorial Hospital, 5 Woodland Rd. 5-6:30pm. Sara Epstein, 979-7025.

Boston **Boston Area Rape Crisis Center** drop-in group for women who have been raped. 492-RAPE.

Cambridge **Incest Survivors Group**. Women's Center (see above). 7:30-9:30pm.

Cambridge **Non-offending male sexual abuse survivors** group meets first Thursday of every month. Cambridge Ctr. of Commerce conference room, 859 Mass. Ave. 8:30-10pm. \$5 donation. 498-9881.

Friday

Worcester AIDS Project-Worcester support group for HIV positive, PWAs, PWARCs, supporters. Open to all lesbians, gay men. 51 Jackson St. 7-9pm. Dana 508/755-3773.

Boston <

It's that old highway I'm looking for

My pre-AIDS fantasy: 'I want Grace Jones to spit on me from the stage at the River Club before straight people even know who she is'

By Andrew Miller

I first heard about AIDS in 1981, which was also my freshman year of college. Two weeks into my first semester, even before the yogurt I bought on the first day of classes went bad, I had come out of the closet.

A few weeks later, Fritz, who was the first man I ever held a torch for, and who was soon to be the first man who ever gave me a blowjob, brought me down to the piers at the end of Christopher Street at 2 a.m. on a Saturday night, partly to shock me and partly to see if I'd be shocked.

He later told me sternly that I would have to be careful. At the Mineshaft, he said, there were hundreds of willing participants, but also several dozen men who would be more attracted to my (he supposed) unwilling naivete. I could get hurt, I could get killed, I could get syphilis (which I had heard about in ninth grade health), or parasites, or hepatitis (which Ms. Doran, the health teacher, had neglected to mention). "And there's this new thing gay men in California are getting," he added.

I suppose I took comfort in knowing that it was happening 3,000 miles away. Of course, it was happening two blocks away as well. But I was happier thinking that "it," for it didn't even have a name, then, was confined to Los Angeles, where I had never been and never planned to go. And I was planning to go back to the piers.

Later on, when I could no longer pretend that AIDS wasn't happening, I began to



Misty watercolor memories: Grace Jones

wish that it wasn't happening, a tiny step towards acceptance and action, but a step nonetheless. I think that I took it personally that AIDS had coincided with my coming out.

There is a whole generation of gay men more or less my age who must feel as cheated as I do. We, the "Post-Kennedy Assassination Generation," as we were curtly referred to in *Parting Glances*, no longer have access to the lifestyle that preceded us. We are heirs to a burgled fortune.

I imagine that gay men just five or six years younger than I have experienced the health crisis differently. But men my age were shown what our birthright was to be — Gloria Gaynor, the baths, nights in the meat rack at Fire Island, poppers, alcohol, dancing till dawn. And then the lid of the box of jewels was snapped shut.

Never mind that, coming from a working-class Brooklyn family, my access to Fire Island, discos, or even drugs would have been limited by economic realities. Never mind that my concept of what life was like "back then" is a mosaic of scenes from *Cruising*, old Al Parker flicks, misty recollections of older friends and Andrew Holleran novels. Some older ex-boyfriends have tried to tell me that the late '70s were actually awful, but because they themselves were scrambling to adjust to the ever-changing rules of AIDS, I didn't always believe them.

Today I like to think that I have moved away from my denial fantasies completely. I worked with Gay Men's Health Crisis (GMHC) in 1985, before it was fashionable and well-paying. I have carried picket signs at the Department of Health, City Hall, in Albany, Washington, D.C., and the Bronx. And I've also buried a dozen friends, many of whom I met doing AIDS work, but some of whom I knew before. My friend Bill, who died last spring, was among the first gay men I met my freshman year of college. Along with Fritz, he took me to bars, dances, meetings of the gay students union, and also had meals with me in the dining hall, studied with me in the library, and introduced me to his boyfriend, who was a senior.

But even today I can't listen to the Village People singing "YMCA" without feeling a sense of loss. Not because of what the song is actually about, but because of what it has come to represent for me. When Donna Summer's "Bad Girls" came out in 1978, it changed my life, because the music spoke of the promise of all the things I wanted and couldn't have. The meaning of the songs transcended their subject matter; for me they are an aural history that speaks more clearly than any book ever could, not just about dancing and having sex but about being alive in the late '70s. And in the late '70s, as a closeted teenager on Long Island, I desperately wanted to feel alive. Summer's homophobic remarks years later only hurt me all the more.

Ironically, after a few years' hiatus, dance clubs are again in vogue, and there are a half dozen places to have sex, alone and in groups, all night long. But after prowling around 14th Street and Ninth Avenue for weeks in a row, I realize that it's not really the dancing and the mescaline and peyote and poppers and ethyl rags and color-coded hankies, or even the sex itself, that I'm after.

In one of his old flicks, filmed in the West Village, Casey Donovan cruises the piers — and the warehouses and old elevated West Side Highway are still standing. Seeing that makes me reflective, too, because it's that old highway that I'm looking for. Not an escape into an apolitical, hedonistic fantasy world, but a taste of the innocence and the joy and the newfound sense of community power that helped all the rest to happen. We

can build another highway, but it just won't be the same.

I want Grace Jones to spit on me from the stage at the River Club before straight people even know who she is. I want to leaflet supermarkets urging a boycott of orange juice by day, and then take Quaaludes and speed and dance all night to Sylvester's latest hit at the Flamingo. I want my moustache and beard and my flannel shirts to be the uniform, not the exception.

I want to cruise the Ramble in Central Park in October for a hot man with a pony tail and a leather jacket who takes me back to his \$90-a-month rent-controlled studio on West 77th Street, where I fuck him all night — without condoms. I want to come out of the Ramrod drunk at 3 a.m. on a Tuesday night and not see posters for GMHC's latest safer sex forum and ACT UP's "Stop the Church" demo. I want to not know the names and phone numbers of the health commissioners in New York City, Washington, D.C., and San Francisco.

I realize today that life is probably no better and no worse than it was 12 or 13 years ago. We have eliminated some old problems and encountered some new ones, and in our diverse, mystical style, we will continue to deal and to thrive as a community of lesbians and gay men.

Being in my twenties instead of my thirties no longer makes me angry. Having been at New York City's Community Center when Jesse Jackson spoke there last fall may one day seem as exciting to someone ten years younger than I as watching Bette Midler sing "You Gotta Have Friends" at the Gay Pride Festival in Washington Square Park in 1973 seems to me. But even that comparison betrays the difference between two eras. Perhaps neither is better than the other, but once in a while, when Gloria Gaynor's voice rises up from the jukebox at the Badlands, I wish the that I'd had the chance to live it, and decide for myself. □

Andrew Miller is the news editor at OutWeek magazine.

ClinicalPartners presents a benefit workshop featuring Martin Delaney, co-founder and Director of Project Inform; co-author, *Strategies for Survival; A Gay Men's Health Manual for the Age of AIDS*. This workshop is designed to assist persons touched by AIDS in discovering ways to gain control of their lives.

Tuesday, December 12, 1989, 7:00 pm. Boston

Living Center, 140 Clarendon Street,

YWCA—7th Floor, Boston, MA.

\$10 Donations. All proceeds to benefit the Boston Living Center.

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Partners Health

Resource Center,

321 Columbus Avenue

(lower level), Boston, MA.

For more information call 536-5950.

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